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LONDON, SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 1915

INTERNATIONAL CHARACTER OF THE HOLY SEE

The conditions that obtain in Europe, though embarrassing to the Holy See, emphasize its international character. The scrupulous impartiality with which Benedict XV. has discharged the duties of his high office in difficult circumstances will go far to facilitate the inevitable international recognition and guarantee of the independence of the Holy See.

A well informed writer in the New York Sunday Times has a very interesting article entitled, "The Pope will stay in Rome," in a recent number. Whether or not he is correctly informed in this instance, the articles of A. Veteran Diplomat as a rule indicate accurate and unusual sources of information.

The reports circulated in the Teuton press to the effect that the sympathies of the Holy Father are with Germany, Austria-Hungary and Turkey "have received," he notes, "a certain amount of credence on the part of thoughtless people in foreign countries," and he continues:

To what extent this importing of pro-German or pro-Austrian leanings to the Holy Father is without foundation has been shown during the past week by his stern refusal to intercede for the rector of an Italian village near the frontier who was sentenced to death by court martial after conviction of communicating information to the Austrian enemy by means of a wireless concealed on the roof of his church.

Benedict has not hesitated to issue instructions to the Italian parish clergy to assist instead of obstructing the authorities in their work of mobilizing the military and naval defenses of the Holy Father is without foundation has been shown during the past week by his stern refusal to intercede for the rector of an Italian village near the frontier who was sentenced to death by court martial after conviction of communicating information to the Austrian enemy by means of a wireless concealed on the roof of his church.

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ject of much negotiation and of a number of long interviews at Albano between Prime Minister Salandra and the late Cardinal Agliardi before Christmas, but at a time when the probability of Italy's being drawn in to the war on the side of the powers of the Triple Entente became apparent. Cardinal Gasparri, Papal Secretary of State, and who had lived for nineteen happy years in Paris, was present at some of these discussions with the Italian Premier, and it is understood that the negotiations on the part of the Church were carried on under the personal direction of Benedict XV.

Under the terms of the provisional arrangement the Pontiff

1. Admitted the impossibility of the continued residence at Rome and unrestricted action there of the diplomatic representatives of powers with whom Italy was at war—representatives who, by reason of their diplomatic immunities, were exempt from the jurisdiction of Italian law.

2. The possibility of restricting the action of the Austrian Embassy and of the Prussian and Bavarian Legations by internment the members thereof in one of the Pontifical palaces, such as the Vatican, the Lateran, or Castel Gandolfo was likewise excluded.

3. The complete independence of the Holy See, its entire spiritual freedom, and the inviolability of the exteriority of the Pontifical palaces are confirmed both by the Italian Government and the Papacy.

4. An agreement with regard to the adoption of certain measures of general order to be extended to all the diplomatic representatives accredited to the Holy See by foreign powers, both hostile and friendly to Italy. These measures would be in harmony with the absolute neutrality and complete impartiality of the Papacy in the present war, since they would restrict and suspend the diplomatic privileges of the representatives accredited to the Vatican of all the belligerent nations.

5. In this way the Holy See maintains its complete independence toward the Government of Italy and toward all foreign powers.

Article V. of the Law of Papal guarantees states that the Sovereign Pontiff shall

Have the use of the Apostolic palaces of the Vatican and Lateran, with all the edifices, gardens and grounds annexed thereto, and dependent on them, as well as the Villa of Castel Gandolfo, with all its belongings and dependencies. The said palaces, villa, and annexes, like the museums, the libraries, and the art and archaeological collections therein existing, are exempt from every tax and impost, and from all expropriations on the ground of public utility, and are, moreover, inalienable.

The plain intent and meaning seems to be that the Italian nation could never alienate these palaces and annexes; but unscrupulous politicians have interpreted the article as meaning that the Pope has no right to alienate the said palaces, museums, libraries, etc., on the ground that these belong to the nation, the Pope having only "the use" thereof.

Hence our writer justly observes: "The agreement of Cardinal Agliardi and of Prime Minister Salandra negotiated last winter, and containing a renewed recognition of the inviolability of the exteriority of the Pontifical palaces by the Italian Government, is therefore of extreme importance, as emphasizing anew the ownership of the Vatican and of its contents by the Holy See; and an acknowledgment thereof by the Italian nation, in the person of its Premier, and of his Cabinet.

The world will be wiser in many ways when peace is again restored to it; but amongst all the lessons of the War none will be impressed more deeply than that of the necessity of international good faith. The masterly because absolutely honest, single-minded and straight forward diplomacy of the great Pope who has been called to fill the Fisherman's Throne in these troublous times will bring to an end an anomalous condition by securing international recognition and international guarantees of the independence of the Father of all the faithful. If the information of A. Veteran Diplomat is correct, then it is evident that the Italian Government will facilitate instead of obstructing this desirable and necessary solution of a problem which will never be settled until it is settled right.

THE U. S. NOTE TO GERMANY

Startling was the resignation of Mr. Bryan and also his reason for resigning. Senator Borah, a Western leader in the Senate, had already predicted war between the United States and Germany inside of sixty days. Bryan's reason for resigning the Secretaryship of State was his desire to prevent war. Such at least was the reason the newspapers led us to believe that actuated him. Reading more carefully, however, the situation appears less alarming. Bryan is committed to arbitration. Wilson, though far from being a jingo, does not consider that the present issue is a question for arbitration.

Something the papers do not emphasize is the offer of the United States to mediate between Britain and Germany in the matter that gave rise to the present situation. The United States has protested against England's blockade of German ports, a blockade which is a departure from international conventions as hitherto understood and practised, and which is given by Germany as justification for her submarine warfare on British shipping. It is pretty generally understood that the United States is about to renew her protest against England's interference with neutral shipping; and in her second note to Germany she expressly offers to mediate between the chief belligerent powers on the great question that underlies the whole dispute.

RURAL LEADERSHIP

Millions of dollars are spent—we had almost written, wasted—each year for the betterment of agriculture in Canada. There is a Federal Department of Agriculture, and there is a Department of Agriculture for each province. There are Experimental Farms and Agricultural Colleges. The aggregate cost of all these institutions must run into millions of dollars; the amelioration of agricultural conditions bears no reasonable proportion to this cost.

Rural life is unattractive; the rural population is being depleted; agricultural methods are practically unchanged since a quarter of a century ago. True, there is an increased use of machinery but neither Departments of Agriculture nor Experimental Farms nor Agricultural Colleges can claim to have had any influence at all in this regard. What is wrong? Are the State agencies for the betterment of agriculture incompetent and ineffective? We believe that in every particular they are abreast of the times and competent to render invaluable aid to the farmer. But they fail to do so. They are practically ineffective.

The failure, at any rate the comparative failure, is due to the fact that between the farming community and the agencies designed to serve it there are no adequate channels of communication. It is the realization of this great fact, we take it, that has impelled the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph to provide a summer course for rural leaders. Though not intended exclusively for clergymen the management address themselves directly to clergymen whose charges lie in rural districts.

The first paragraph of the Advance Notice reads as follows:

These who are interested in Rural Life will be glad to learn that the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, has made plans to run a Summer School for Rural Leaders. The school will open on Monday, July 26th, and close Saturday, August 7th, 1915. It is the purpose of the school to furnish instruction to all those interested in Rural Leadership. Owing to the limited accommodation only a certain number can be admitted. Admission to the course will be in order of application. Those eligible for enrollment are clergymen, school teachers and any others interested in Rural Betterment.

The speakers and the subjects are also given. These are in our opinion comparatively unimportant. The all-important thing is that clergymen and others who are interested in rural life and fitted for rural leadership are given the opportunity of getting in touch with a thoroughly up-to-date Agricultural College competent in every respect to render invaluable assistance to the farmers of Canada. In touch with this institution they will provide precisely what is lacking, namely the necessary channels of communication between the College and its constituency, the farming community.

The matter of expense is of practical interest, so we reproduce the paragraph of the circular:

Students will be accommodated in the College Residence at \$5.00 a week, room and board. The rooms are furnished with single beds and all applicants will be required to bring pillow, pillow-slip, sheets and towels. All other bedding will be supplied. Arrangements have been made for special fare and a third rates on the railroad on the certificate plan.

When we have in every township, in every square mile of every township, a farmer who is thoroughly in touch with all our agencies for the betterment of agriculture, when the helpful suggestions of the latter will have been carried into practical effect by farmers here, there, everywhere, then shall we have the amelioration of agricultural conditions which these institutions are designed to bring about.

We do not see any objection to the ambition of farmers' sons to enter the learned professions, business life, or any sphere of usefulness to which they are attracted. A farmer's son need not be limited more than others in his choice of vocation. But surely some of those who have the means and opportunity of bettering the conditions under which their fathers worked, might be directed to the higher study of agriculture. After some years of a high school course there should be amongst farmers' sons who intend to follow in the footsteps of their fathers in the noblest and most necessary of vocations, the ambition to be leaders in their class: pioneers in practical agricultural improvement. In a word it should be the ambition of a certain number of farmers' sons to take a full course at the Ontario Agricultural College.

If we had in the clergymen whose charges are in the country a certain number who fully realize the great advantages of such a course there is not a doubt in the world that many ambitious sons of sturdy farmers who are proud of their work could be induced to take such a course.

Then there are numerous short courses. The Summer School will put the clergyman in touch with all the opportunities afforded by the College.

We can not urge too strongly on all interested to take advantage of the opportunities offered.

Programmes of the School in detail will be issued later on. In the meantime for further information write G. C. Creelman, President O. A. C., Guelph.

Arrange your vacations so as to take in this School. Clergymen may secure information through Archbishop Neil McNeil, of Toronto; Rev. R. A. Hiltz, Dr. J. G. Shearer, Dr. T. Albert Moore, Confederation Life Building; Rev. P. K. Dayfoot, 182 Collier St., Toronto; Rev. W. T. Gann, 33 Victor Ave., Toronto, or by watching the various church papers for further information.

GERMANY NOT THE ONLY FAITH BREAKER

Our press rings the changes on Germany's breach of faith with regard to Belgium. It may not be generally known even to the omniscient and dogmatic moulders of public opinion that at the Congress of Vienna the five great powers of Europe pledged themselves to see that the Papal States should be kept intact and inviolable. The acts were signed on July 7, 1815. Forty years later, after the Crimean War, when another European settlement was agreed to, all Europe reaffirmed at the Congress of Paris what the Congress of Vienna had declared regarding the Papal States.

In 1870, however, every one of the five powers repudiated the pledge to safeguard the independence of the Pope. To prevent the spoliation of the Holy See was not necessary. A word would have been sufficient. That word was not spoken. English papers sent up a chorus of approbation of the forger of the Ems telegram. England applauded Mazzini and Garibaldi. Faithless to a common trust they lost all trust in each other. They armed until the people groaned under the burden imposed by armament on land and sea. Now they are locked in international death struggle.

Well, again we shall have a Congress and a European readjustment. It is safe to say that one of the most certain and secure conditions of peace will be the international recognition of the independence of the Holy See.

ABOUT BOOKS AND READERS

The Catholic press is not entirely without blame in this matter of creating and fostering a demand for Catholic books. People should be able to look to the columns of their weekly paper for light and guidance in the selection of their reading matter. Catholic literary activity should receive due space in its pages. But our knowledge of the religious press inclines us to the view that the average reader who is restricted to such avenues of information will, in very many cases, be unaware of the fact that there is such a thing as a printing press in existence.

We think that every Catholic journal should include upon its staff a capable reviewer of books. For, it is alas too true that there are reviewers who are not capable. The mere fact that a book has been written by a Catholic should not entitle to a superlative eulogy. The reviewer who ransacks the English language for complimentary adjectives every time

a Catholic book finds its way to his desk does untold injury to the very cause he professes to serve. For no amount of praise can elevate mediocrity to the level of genius, and the reader who has been beguiled by the reviewer's recommendation into the purchase of a worthless or indifferent book, turns in disgust from the notices of Catholic publications. And thus a patron is converted into an enemy. The reviewer should be conscious of his responsibility. He should never allow personal considerations to influence his verdict, but should acquit himself of his task without fear or favor.

In the May Columbiad Dr. O'Hagan has a very thought-provoking article on this subject of Catholic reviewers. We sometimes forget, he says, that the Catholic Church is being fashioned, humanly speaking, by that silent intellectual work of which we are unfortunately disposed often to take no notice. And he asks if it would not be better to substitute thoughtful literary criticism for some of the rapid stuff which oftentimes chokes the columns of our Catholic journals. And as we have argued against the exclusion of all but Catholic books from our Catholic libraries, so Dr. O'Hagan warns us that the greatest mistake that the Catholic critic sometimes makes is to attack and reduce to dust everything in literature and art that does not grow out of Catholic faith. Genius, he reminds us, does not choose its altar, for it may lure the soul of a Homer or a Virgil among the Pagan gods, and the eyes of a Pantheistic Goethe, or touch with fire the lips of a Catholic Dante. If Chaucer and Pope were Catholics, Wordsworth and Tennyson were Anglicans, and Browning a Nonconformist. The Catholic review column should, then, be a reliable guide to the best in literature, altogether independent of the author's faith.

COLUMBA.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

SINCE THE "June Wedding" has, in the English-speaking world at least, become something like a time-honored institution, the month's recurrence may be deemed a fitting occasion for indulging in some reflections on the history of the ring, recognized throughout Christendom—and beyond it—as the symbol of the lasting union of the wedded pair. Everything relating to a wedding is dear to the feminine heart especially, and what more so than the little golden band which has so many centuries of sacred tradition behind it.

IF, OBSERVED a well-known historical and antiquarian writer a few years ago, a lady in this generation were asked on which hand the wedding ring should be worn, she would probably answer with some surprise: "Why! on the left hand, of course; how can you ask such a question?" It has in our day become so much an accepted tradition that the left hand, and the left hand only, is the proper one for this purpose that surprise over such a query would be considered its natural accompaniment. It would not, however, have sounded so extraordinary to our Catholic great-grandmothers. Father Herbert Thurston, S. J., who has given the matter some study, avers that had great-grandmother worn the ring on her left hand, which is perhaps doubtful, she would at least have heard her elders speak of a time when the ring in the marriage service was placed by the groom not upon the left, but upon the right hand of the bride. We have only to look at the numerous reproductions available in these days of many works of the Old Masters to realize that in making such an assertion Father Thurston had, in the art galleries of Europe, not to speak of other and more canonical witnesses, the evidence of a long series of centuries behind him.

THE JESUIT antiquarian proceeds to summon several such witnesses to his aid. One of them may be cited here. There are still in existence some of those rare little books used by priests in England, Ireland and Scotland in Penal times for the administration of the Sacraments. One such is an "Ordo Baptizandi Aliaque Sacramenta Adminstrand" (now commonly termed a *Rituale*) printed in Paris in 1738, which contains the order for celebrating the Sacrament of Matrimony then in use. The text and rubrics are necessarily in Latin, but the responses of the bride and bridegroom are in English. Translated, the rubric is as follows: "Then shall the priest sprinkle the ring

with Holy Water in the form of a cross and the bride-groom taking the ring from the priest's hand, and holding the right hand of the bride in his own left, shall say, etc., etc. . . . Then the bridegroom shall place the ring upon the thumb of the bride, saying: In the name of the Father. Then upon the second finger saying: and of the Son. Then upon the third finger, saying: and of the Holy Ghost. Then upon the fourth finger, saying: Amen. And there he shall leave the ring."

THE CHANGE of custom in placing the ring upon the fourth finger (counting the thumb as the first) of the left hand would seem to have taken place a few years later than the date of this *Rituale*, for in another, printed in 1758, while directing that in the putting on of the ring, the bridegroom should take the bride's right hand in his own left, it is expressly enjoined that the ring should be placed upon the ring finger, not of the right but of the left hand. This direction becomes even more explicit in later editions of the English *Rituale*, and in this form has ever since continued. It is interesting to remember however that according to so respectable an authority as Father Thurston it dates back scarcely more than one hundred and fifty years. And the same authority while disclaiming criticism of what has been settled by ecclesiastical authority cannot withhold an expression of regret that the change should have been made since it shattered an interesting link in the chain which bound modern Catholics to the pre-Reformation Church in England.

AS TO THE witness of Art to this old custom in the Marriage Service, it may be worth while mentioning Raphael's *Sposalizio*, or Marriage of the Blessed Virgin, wherein St. Joseph is depicted as placing the ring upon the right hand of his Holy Spouse. This painting is in the Brera, Milan. Or Lorenzo da Viterbo's masterpiece of the same subject, in which the High Priest holds the right wrist of the Blessed Virgin while St. Joseph places the ring upon the fourth finger of the same hand. A still more ancient delineation of the custom deals with the marriage of King Henry III. of England with Eleanor of Provence. This is from a manuscript of Matthew Paris, the English chronicler of the thirteenth century. Or, to go back further still, the St. Alban's Chronicle depicts the marriage of the Emperor Henry to Maude, daughter of Henry I.—still placing the ring upon the right hand. From all of which it may be seen that Father Thurston's expression of regret is founded upon a natural and reasonable regard for an old custom, hallowed by so many precious memories.

THESE EVIDENCES of the practice referred to might be multiplied indefinitely did space permit. It does not follow, however, that it was invariable in pre-Reformation times, for there are many instances on record of the placing of the ring upon the left hand. According to the learned editors of the Catholic Dictionary, St. Isidore of Seville, quoted by Chardon, specifies distinctly the use of the fourth finger of the left hand, "for in this finger there is a certain vein which runs thence to the heart." This fanciful idea is, says Father Thurston, but a superstition derived from the Pagan writer, Aulus Gellius, who himself professes to quote it from the old Egyptian embalmers. It proves, nevertheless, that in olden times some degree of latitude existed in regard to this ancient custom, attributable, no doubt, to the isolation of one country from another, as compared with a later time. None the less, the old Sarum rubric, and the Catholic *Ordo* down to 1759 distinctly intend the ring to be worn on the right hand. Cardinal Gasquet, whose judgment is entitled to the greatest weight, has given it as his opinion indeed that the change was due to the German reformers.

WE HAD intended to touch upon other ceremonies of the marriage service but space and time for the moment forbid. Suffice it to say that as we now know it the service is quite unique in that it is the only surviving relic in England and in this country of the once splendid uses of Sarum and York. "In the centuries of persecution which followed the Reformation," says Father Thurston, "when the possession of a service book might cost the life of its owner, when anything like

ceremonial had to be curtailed to the absolutely essential, when ecclesiastical education could only be obtained on foreign soil, and English students were trained not in one but in many different countries, it was inevitable that our forefathers in the Faith should seek strength and cohesion by the closest possible union in ritual as well as in doctrine with the centre of Catholic truth.

"THE COUNCIL of Trent," he continues, "which had addressed itself among other things to the correction of liturgical extravagances, had begun a movement which resulted in the issue of a series of authoritative service books—a Missal, a Breviary, a Pontifical, a *Ceremoniale*, and last of all a *Rituale*. But seeing that matrimony was a Sacrament in which not the priest, but the contracting parties themselves were the ministers, and necessarily used their own vernacular, the Fathers of the Council had wished that in this Sacrament especially the laudable customs of each diocese should remain unaltered." This being so the lament that the turbulent period following the Reformation should have resulted in elimination of so many old and hallowed practices seem perfectly just and reasonable.

ON THE BATTLE LINE

THE War news is distinctly more encouraging this week. The French maintain their successful offensive. The Russians whom we thought practically hors de combat for some time to come, have turned and inflicted a smashing defeat on their over-confident enemies. Even from the Dardanelles the gloomy news or absence of news is relieved by word of some substantial success.

ON THE EAST

CAN THE Russians come back? They can. They do. They have been coming back all week, although it was only yesterday they made report as to their victories. On Tuesday Von Mackensen's army of Cracow, which had halted in the march along the railway from Przemyśl to Lemberg at a point near Mosiska, eighteen miles east of Przemyśl, for rest and renewal of supplies, resumed its advance. It did not go far. The Russians let the Germans come up to their wire entanglements, and then poured a volume of rifle and artillery fire into them that did frightful execution. The front rank could not retire quickly because behind were successive waves of German infantry coming up to the attack, and the losses were very great. Next morning the Germans tried again, and not only failed to pierce the Russian front, but were driven back over a mile. There are no Germans on the west front now within 25 miles of Lemberg.

ON the south or Danube battlefield the Russian victory was even more pronounced. Several successful engagements took place early in the week at various points along the river, in which thousands of prisoners were taken. On Thursday strongly reinforced—perhaps by some of the men who had tackled Von Mackensen on the west front on Wednesday—the Russians made a swift dash at Von Linsingen's army, a part of which had crossed the Danube to the north bank at Zarawno, about thirty miles southeast of Lemberg. The Austrians and Germans who had crossed the river and advanced as far north as ten miles beyond the Danube on a wide front, believing that no serious resistance was to be anticipated, were enveloped on both flanks, crushed and driven back to the south bank of the river in the course of a single day. They lost 17 cannon, 50 machine guns, over 9,000 prisoners and a very heavy list of killed and wounded.—Globe, June 12th.

ON THE ITALIAN FRONTIER

OF the serious nature of the advance on Trieste there is no doubt. Heavy fighting is taking place on the Isonzo. The Italians will not push far beyond Monfalcone till there is no longer danger of Lemberg. The Austrians and Germans who had crossed the river and advanced as far north as ten miles beyond the Danube on a wide front, believing that no serious resistance was to be anticipated, were enveloped on both flanks, crushed and driven back to the south bank of the river in the course of a single day. They lost 17 cannon, 50 machine guns, over 9,000 prisoners and a very heavy list of killed and wounded.—Globe, June 12th.

ON THE WEST LINE

So doubtful has the German position become in northwestern France that the authorities in Berlin are throwing great new bodies of troops into the field there. From Holland come reports that the Belgian rail-